



Cohasset Public Schools
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Empower Students to Improve Communities

REGULAR MEETING OF THE COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 1, 2023
6:00 PM

How to Participate:

In Person

METCO Headquarters
11 Roxbury Street
Roxbury, MA 02119

Televised

Streamed Live on Cohasset 143TV

How to Participate:

Virtual

Zoom (*chat enabled*)
<https://zoom.us/j/93210720844>
ID: 932 1072 0844 / Password: 461964
Dial In: +1 929 205 6099

Facebook (watch/listen only)
Cohasset Live Streaming

All School Committee Meetings Are Recorded.

AGENDA

In Attendance:

Ted Carr, Secretary
Lance Dial, Chairman
Paul Kearney
Craig MacLellan, Vice Chairman
Lydia St. Onge

Also In Attendance:

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO
Aleisa Gittens-Carle, METCO Director
Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Lance Dial called to order the February 1, 2023, regular meeting of the Cohasset school committee. We have a very special meeting today because all members from the Cohasset school committee are presenting this meeting which is being streamed live on Zoom and Facebook from METCO Headquarters in Boston. On the agenda this evening, we'll learn a lot about what's going on with the METCO Program and how METCO enhances the quality of learning in our district. We're really excited to be here, and Chairman Dial would like to first do the customary roll call, since we're in a slightly different setting. **Roll Call: Ted Carr-Present; Paul Kearney-Present; Lydia St. Onge-Present; Craig MacLellan-Present; Lance Dial-Present.**

Opening Remarks

Chairman Dial will now proceed to the next item on the agenda, which is for public comment. Public Comment is for an item that is not on the agenda. If folks have comments on items that are on the agenda, feel free to let them know, but please reserve that comment until they get to that item on the agenda.

Public Comment – No Public Comment.

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

Milly Arbaje-Thomas METCO President and CEO welcomes the Cohasset school committee and school leaders to Roxbury, and to Boston! It's always a pleasure when school committees and school leaders choose this location to have a place to meet. It's very special for not only us to be part of a community where our students are educated in Cohasset. They have taken the opportunity to come and see where our students are coming from and to learn about the history of the METCO program and learn more intimately what they have worked with. Ms. Arbaje-Thomas thanks the chair, members from the school committee, and Dr. Sullivan for coming from the coastal community and coming here today. Ms. Arbaje-Thomas will be presenting their new exhibit and all the history of the METCO program. The new exhibit hall at METCO headquarters was built last year with a grand opening for this new location after coming out of the pandemic. METCO was established over 40 years ago by residents in the community of Roxbury where the program really started. If they could ever find a place that had available additional room to showcase the history of the METCO program that Ms. Arbaje-Thomas says they were able and lucky to do. When they moved in and finished everything upstairs the landlord came to them and was moving to another location and asked if we wanted the first floor of this building, so it was a dream come true to be able to do this with their historical programs.

All of METCO histories exist and are archived and stored at Northeastern University, to what Ms. Arbaje-Thomas says they call it "hacking the archives". They have teenagers from the METCO program spend the summer reading through all the literatures and extracting the best photos. They went up to the Communications Director at METCO and at that time, came up with a timeline for this program.

Milly Arbaje-Thomas shares her presentation to the school committee, and anyone can take a look at this of all what the Cohasset community has to offer. METCO which stands for The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity, was created in 1966 by parents, organizing in Boston and suburban towns to provide the opportunity for children from racially segregated schools in Boston, and children from racially isolated schools in the suburbs to learn together in an integrated public-school setting.

The METCO program was not mandated, nor was it forced upon. It wasn't legislatives that made us do this, it was literally parents. The purpose of the program was to address racial imbalance and racial segregation. As of right now, we have 3,150 students in the METCO program, and we are in 33 school district communities.

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

The Hull community has reached out to METCO, both the superintendent and the school committee chair as well as State Representative Joan Meschino. We're exploring that area and how can we expand the METCO Program. A snapshot of racial demographics of the community of students here in Boston and the majority of the METCO communities. Racial imbalance is anything when you're talking about at least 50% as one group. A pie chart of the racial demographics is presented by Ms. Arbaje-Thomas showing the percentile of METCO students who attend Cohasset Public Schools categorized as; 2.9% African American; 2.4% Asian, 1.2% Hispanic, 1.2% Multi-Race/Non-White; 92.3% White who attend Cohasset Public Schools. Cohasset Public Schools 100% qualifies for being part of the METCO program. This is what METCO addresses throughout their program.

For those who may not know how The METCO Program runs, there was a lot based out of Massachusetts and right behind the wall where the Cohasset school committee is sitting the year 1965 captures a Massachusetts estate representative from Roxbury, *Roy Bolin* who wanted to do something about the ground work based on education with a rule that came out at least 10 years before the year 1965, and he noticed that Massachusetts wasn't doing anything to actually address racially imbalanced schools. *Roy Bolin* created and proposed a racial imbalance act and was directly from the Roxbury community, here where METCO is right now in Roxbury, Massachusetts. This basically became a law that supports the METCO Program. This is why legislature had to do something to support the program financially because it is a law and is currently the only program in the state of Massachusetts that addresses the racial imbalance of our schools. *Roy Bolin* wanted to know why the state of Massachusetts didn't want to try to integrate schools in Massachusetts while attending Boston Public Schools with the risk of losing state funding which is Chapter 70 State Funding. The Racial Imbalance Act is a Massachusetts General Law called Chapter 76, Section 12A. The METCO Program is funded with a METCO line item of \$29.4 million dollars for METCO 3,150 students and as of right now there is a reimbursement of \$8,314 per student. So, whatever the school district in Cohasset receives for METCO students will also receive the exact amount for METCO enrollment. This is now the law that protects the METCO Program, and the program is funded in three different ways. There are category qualifications to identify the different title fundings that are available to the other needs people may have. Just five years ago the METCO Program was \$20 million dollars and right now the program is \$29.4 million dollars in which they receive every year to fund 3,150 METCO students.

The reason why the METCO Program has what is called a "marginal seat program," as to what the State refers METCO as a type of program that we're categorized at. The METCO Program reimburses the school district for this grant for METCO students to be there and helps to pay for the Director and programming, obviously the most important cost which is transportation. It is not a dollar-for-dollar match on purpose because it is a "marginal seat program." This means that the state already has empty seats in school districts that would otherwise go unfilled. Cohasset is filling those seats with diversity and getting a grant for it too! Most programs actually pay for diversity to come in like in colleges and the workforce, while in this case, we're also providing some financial support for the program to exist, it's a win, win for everybody!

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

Ms. Arbaje-Thomas states METCO students are receiving a great education and getting some diversity. Some people refer the METCO Program as a bus program, and Ms. Arbaje-Thomas dislikes hearing people say that. Busing is just how we get to the school, we're really a different type of transportation, we're not moving buses, we're moving people and transforming communities.

METCO helps the next generation to appreciate diversity and break down racial barriers and stereotypes. We learn together through friendships in the classroom and sharing experiences to prepare to become global citizens.

The METCO Headquarters is the METCO Program. We focus on four areas in this office, we are the main entity that does all the recruitment and referral for all new families coming in which is our major role. We also provide student and family support services and now it's a little bit about what we are doing. We're also the conveners of our actual community. Each partner district is responsible for enrolling students, hiring staff (METCO Directors), educating students, and providing support services for them. Last week, we had a beautiful retreat at Gillette Stadium with over 90 school leaders and we convened everybody to talk about how to make METCO better and our communities better. We also always talk about integration and really being part of that conversation around our state and around the nation.

This year for the first time they have some jobs at the district level. We link students to the school district where they are educated and where they can work. We have a hashtag for recruiting students which is a mural when entering the building #Worththeride. Income is not a factor in eligibility for METCO. We can apply for grants and funding which is why Ms. Arbaje-Thomas is asking what the Cohasset schools need because we're able to support in another way besides our state funding as well. We do cultural mini grants, and these are happening at our school districts where we pay for performers, the spoken word in poetry, and the artist to come in and do something in Arts. Our integration is bigger now than just METCO. We're really coming into the presence for people that are looking for diversity into other educational and enrichment programs. This past year, we received a grant for \$500,000 from that state, in addition to our line item on racial equity work and this is what we decided how to use this money and the districts will be able to tap into this money once we decide what the committee knows how we're going to use that. The goal is to do a few things for all of METCO together. On Tuesday, March 21, 2023, METCO will have an Advocacy Day and Aleisa Gittens-Carle and METCO Directors will go up to the State House to make sure that every community is represented there.

Mr. Carr expresses his thank you to Ms. Arbaje-Thomas for having us, we're delighted to be here. Mr. Carr grew up in the city of Boston, born in 1968 and the grade school he was going to was right up the street from where the METCO Headquarters is. With all the commodity going on back then he ended up at a community-based school in Brookline. His best friend on the block was African American, and it was a challenging time back then. It's amazing how much METCO has done and he's happy to hear that the young youth from here likes coming to Cohasset.

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

Mr. Kearney also thanks Ms. Arbaje-Thomas for having us, this is a wonderful organization and it's great to know this all started with parents. We've made some good things together as well. To see the advocacy like a state representative. One of the things about Massachusetts is that we're a Commonwealth, so whatever is good for you, is good for us, and we really have to figure out and educate on how a citizen can write a bill. A citizen can write a bill in Massachusetts for the Commonwealth and there are three Commonwealths', one is Virginia, and the other is Washington, D.C. This just shows how to take an idea and put it into action and to see this evolve into such a wonderful program, Mr. Kearney says he's proud to be part of it.

Mrs. St. Onge loved being here tonight and thanks Ms. Arbaje-Thomas very much for having us. We've been talking about this for a long time ever since Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Scollins came to METCO Headquarters for the opening. It was special to be here and thank you for welcoming us. Mrs. St. Onge is curious about Advocacy Day, and asks how do you gather people on that all-day event?

Ms. Arbaje-Thomas replies they have a Lobbyist and METCO Headquarters pays for a Lobbyist Firm. They have a Lobbyist Firm called Child Consultants and they're in charge of helping us gathering people together that day. They will book appointments for every single METCO district. There will be a schedule for the day, and it starts at 9:30 A.M. with a one-hour program with our state champions of the METCO Program to say a few words, with a couple of speakers, perhaps with some dance performers. Right now, one of the school districts that Ms. Arbaje-Thomas has is called a "step group" and they asked her if they could bring the "step team" over there to make it live enough to save the day with our presence in this. In the past, they've had the Wayland Band play classical music while all this was happening. We had this rally at the State House for METCO that day for 1-2 hours and 1.5 hours of programming. After that, we all split up and there will be a schedule for everybody to visit their State Representative and their State Senator.

Mr. MacLellan thanks Ms. Arbaje-Thomas so much for having us, it's been a privilege to work with METCO in his four years with this school committee, so far. Mr. MacLellan has worked with Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle one of the Directors who is a special person. The reason why the METCO Program to him is so valuable, is that it's embraced properly, it's a bilateral, mutually, beneficial program. A lot of people mistakenly think it's a program that provides an advantage to students who live in Boston to have the privilege of attending a school outside of Boston. That is not what the program is about. Just recently in Cohasset under the leadership of Dr. Sullivan that METCO was referred to as cultural competency, and to Mr. MacLellan that term is just something that tries to underscore the importance of understanding everyone's perspective in any sort of topic on education. If one understands their own perspectives, then they're able to inform more and inform their selves. The METCO Program assists us as we strive to achieve that objective because what it does, it incorporates a lot of different perspectives. We can see by the pie chart on Cohasset that was presented to us, and we are a very homogeneous community. The cultural background is one, a major factor when considering what drives this formulation of different perspectives but is a major one for a community like Cohasset.

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

Mr. MacLellan says the program is to benefit from the perspectives of individuals who come from different backgrounds and grow in different communities. It's hugely valuable to us in Cohasset in that way, it also benefits us greatly as well. It's not just individuals who are able to benefit from the wonderful education in our school, but also the residents, teachers, and students of Cohasset benefit from different perspectives that are brought to it through the METCO Program and thus, enabling us to truly embrace that objective of trying to form a culturally competent district. This is why Mr. MacLellan finds it so important and hopes we seek constant improvement and expand the METCO program.

We have wonderful leadership in Cohasset with the METCO Program. Mr. MacLellan has a question on the 33 METCO districts? The answer to his question may be obvious, that he's just not seeing. What is the expansion ratio to find more districts to have a METCO program?

Ms. Arbaje-Thomas thanks Mr. MacLellan for his summary that he touched on the real purpose of the program and why Cohasset is part of it. Ms. Arbaje-Thomas thanks Mr. MacLellan for summarizing it so eloquently about dual benefits.

Ms. Arbaje-Thomas points to a mural of Ruth Babson who is the founding mother of the METCO Program and Ms. Leon Trilling, who is the chair of the METCO school committee and that is why Ms. Arbaje-Thomas loves school committees and this is why she learned the actual history of the METCO Program. She fell in love with school committees because they have so much power to say yes, or no, to whatever is wanted. To answer Mr. MacLellan's question, it was 1968 when the METCO program doubled in size. It happened that year when Martin Luther King was assassinated. Like any civil rights movement, all of this busing was happening here and Boston was trying to balance that movement, and everybody wanted to join. The way to expand the METCO Program is to have three (3) entities. We need to have the School Committee, the Superintendent, and a State Legislator because this is fully, fully, fully state funded, and we fulfill a state law. Ms. Arbaje-Thomas says to enroll in the METCO Program, they have to do preparation on racial equity work and how equity audits some training with staff to really get prepared to receive our students. Every year we have lobbyist and school communities to try to get us an increase in our METCO budget. We have 116 seat requests in seven (7) communities right now.

Chairman Dial will just add as his colleagues thanked Ms. Arbaje-Thomas, for the benefits that we receive in the district from the METCO Program. We often talk about it as a school committee, but Mr. Dial is relatively new to this school committee with his first year and a half and learned a lot about the METCO Program and the benefit it brings. Part of the reason we did this meeting here now is to help educate our community about the benefits of the METCO Program and to our students, it's really powerful. These are hard issues that we face as a society, and this is a great solution to help deal with some of those and address some of those things.

One of the questions that Mr. Dial has was on what Ms. Arbaje-Thomas mentioned in her presentation was about their recruiting record. What is the recruiting process? Do you have more people interested in the program than you have seats? How do you find seats with districts?

Invited Guests

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

Ms. Arbaje-Thomas states three (3) times a year is the timeline we have actual seats that are available. We got rid of the long wait list that used to be here before our manual. It also was antiquated that way, so that people that had already been enrolled, or were already alumni or moved out of the city of Boston. First, the district identifies their seat availability, before METCO will put in a request. They have an on-line demonstration on how to talk to the leadership that is looking to register. They'll find out and tell us how many seats that are available. Typically, it automatically fills whoever graduates, or whoever drops out of the program for whatever reason it may be. Every district has an allotment already according to DESE and every year will let us know when these seats are identified with availability, initial burden, or request. We take applications starting in the Fall and we do our first lottery in December. We just did our lottery with 700 applications and that's only our first lottery, we do four (4) lotteries for every quarter. Basically, the seats that enrollment quoted is usually 400 seats in the entire METCO Program. We average 1,200 applications from the recent couple of years. We've done a lot of changes in the last couple of years where we now go on-line. People don't have to come here in-person, and if they're school age ready they can make that decision. People no longer have to be the first one in line. For the first time this year we've reduced the application paperwork to apply and school choice where the parents can pick up three (3) school communities so that they can apply to the general METCO Program.

Mr. Dial says there was another striking thing of the changes that Ms. Arbaje-Thomas talked about over the past couple of years on the application process for districts for individual students. These are big changes, and it seems to be that this was implemented very smoothly. That's a credit to the METCO Program and it seems to work, so thank you very much. Mr. Dial wants to thank Ms. Arbaje-Thomas and appreciates on behalf of himself and his fellow colleagues for allowing us this opportunity and privilege to come here and have Ms. Arbaje-Thomas speak to us and see this great facility here.

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan would like to say we've spoken about the importance of parents stepping up and making a difference. There is some synergy here because the school committee is exactly what we do and we should know that Millie Arbaje-Thomas is a METCO parent and she is a representation of that action that really created that color, from its grassroots, a powerful system, before it became, what is known today. We're enormously proud in Cohasset to be a METCO Program, it's what drew Dr. Sullivan in, and we're really blessed and lucky to have Aleisa Gittens-Carle with us who we've been working with for 19 years now. We don't have 46 METCO students, Cohasset has almost 1,500 METCO students because it's truly a program that balances all the cultures and emphasizes both for everyone involved.

Invited Guests

METCO Program, History, and Upcoming Multi-Cultural Event (Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle) – [Materials C1]

Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle introduces *Anaya Pierce*, who is going to talk a little bit about Black History Month with it being February 1st. Anaya is going to talk about Melnea Cass Boulevard which is not too far from here. Melnea Cass Boulevard is located in Roxbury, Massachusetts. It serves the black and brown communities in Roxbury. In 1981, the city of Boston opened Melnea Cass Boulevard in Nubian Square. The city of Boston created this area because of Melnea's hard work and dedication to the people in this community. Melnea Cass was born on June 16, 1896, in Richmond, Virginia. As a young girl she moved to Boston, but after her mother died, she relocated back to Virginia where her aunt had custody over her. It was only after high school that she moved back to Boston, and this is where she started her acronym syndrome. Melnea volunteered helping the community center and she joined many organizations like the NAACP, a brotherhood of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Massachusetts Advisory Committee for the outlet in her sight had a major impact on the black and brown youth. Melnea spent her life advocating for the black community. In fact, her first time organizing an event when she was helping black woman register and cast their vote in 1920. Melnea became the NAACP President of the Boston Chapter. As a president of the NAACP, she organized demonstrations against segregation and disadvantages about black and brown children faced in the Boston Public School system.

Melnea has had an impact on METCO as well. In 1963, Ruth Babson, one of METCO's founders testified before the Boston School Committee to express the inner qualities between black and white students. But the Boston School Committee was not convinced. Since Melnea was president of the NAACP at the time, she helped Ruth Babson and others to be able to express their concerns to the school committee. While Melnea Cass Boulevard adds to the richness of the community that is in Nubian Square. It is run by restaurants, buildings, schools, and stores that connect people every day, it connects, intersects, and unites people. Melnea spent her life advocating and helping mothers, children, and people of color.

If we cannot do great things, we can do small things, in a great way. ~ Melnea Cass ~

Aleisa Gittens-Carle thought we'd like to hear Melnea's story as we're celebrating Black History Month, so often we don't hear some of the history. Melnea Cass Boulevard is a thorough way from the highway, straight over to Tremont Street.

Aleisa Gittens-Carle addresses that it's important for us to get to know our history and recognize diversity, but we think of it in terms of black and white. When we think of diversity, it's so much bigger, than just our skin color.

On April 13, 2023, METCO will be hosting an **INAUGURAL MULTI-CULTURAL NIGHT** and Aleisa Gittens-Carle welcomes the entire Cohasset community to attend. All families can participate in this and we're asking families to simply tell us a little bit about themselves. People can set up tables at the middle and high school to share with us a little bit, of who they are.

Invited Guests

METCO Program, History, and Upcoming Multi-Cultural Event

(Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle) – [Materials C1]

Recently, Cohasset has been under a cloud, there's been a lot of sadness that has happened and not just in Cohasset, but all around the world, there's sadness happening. Aleisa Gittens-Carle says this will be a great way for us to come together and celebrate who we are as a community. We're so proud of the METCO Program and proud of being able to have students who come from Boston to share their experiences with students who live in Cohasset.

We're asking people to look into their own family history and share things that they want to share with us and the district to know who they are. Example, Aleisa Gittens-Carle comes from Bermuda and perhaps she will set up a table showing where she came from. A table that represents your Italian, or Irish heritage, or whatever it is, that little piece of culture that represents who you are. If we really look at it, there's a lot of seasonings in Cohasset, it's not just salt, and it's not just pepper, there's some paprika, there's some turmeric, there's some Jamaican jerk spice and a little bit of everything. We need to be able to bring that out, so we can celebrate because we need some joy.

Last year, one of the principals came up with this, it will bring back the joy and let's keep that joy, sharing who we are. April 13, 2023, from 6:00 -7:30 PM at Cohasset High School and Cohasset Middle School. A celebration of diverse cultures with live performances, music, raffles, and more! Interested in helping? Email Aleisa Gittens-Carle at agittens-carle@cohassetk12.org (or) Jenna Gibbons at jgibbons@cohassetk12.org. Aleisa says so far, several parents from Cohasset and parents from Boston are going to participate on the committee. If anybody wants to join, we are not saying no. We've also contracted with an organization which is a dance company here in Boston that will combine with this event.

Aleisa Gittens-Carle looks forward to seeing all of us that day at our table and celebrating who we are. Also, we want to celebrate who we are through dance and spoken word, but also through cultural traditions with food, and just a little bit of everything.

Mr. MacLellan says we'll need money for this event and asks Dr. Sullivan if this is being held privately, or are we going to make a motion by the school committee to do that?

Aleisa Gittens-Carle states that they've written a grant to get some of the origins that are going to be covered through the cultural funding that METCO received. Some other pieces on this event have been covered through the grant. We can discuss some of the other things when we meet this Friday, February 3rd at 10:00 AM.

School Updates

School News / Plans to Celebrate Black History Month Across the District (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Chairman Dial announces that we've combined school news with teaching and learning, a special combination.

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan says the cultural event that Aleisa Gittens-Carle just talked about today is viewed as one of our strategic plans with our leadership team and it was nice to see all this work happening and to ensure that we embrace culture and that we look at our practices throughout the district in terms on how we're including everyone and everything that works to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion. We do frequent learning walks throughout the district with the leadership team to ensure that everyone in a classroom is accepted as part of the community. Remember one of the things that we highlighted early on about culturally responsive teaching was the idea of having explicit instruction and really looking at data from all students in the room, to see how they're reacting to the explicit instruction. Then building classroom communities, that is the center of all culturally responsive teaching. We're continuing that and Dr. Sullivan thought today, being February 1st, which is the beginning of Black History Month, that we'd review a bit about what we're doing for Black History Month at each of our school buildings.

Dr. Scollins mentions we're doing some collaboration between schools and today was World Read Aloud Day, and this has been around for a while. The middle schools, grade 8 students and the high school students read aloud with the Osgood School 1st grade students.

We have Read Across America which we do in March, and this month in February being related to Black History Month, story time between high school students in the Diversity Club and The National Honor Society read to students at the Osgood School on February 1st, February 8th and on February 14th.

On February 8th and February 14th high school students will read aloud to students at Deer Hill School and will be Black History Read Aloud.

Dr. Sullivan says not only does this point towards culturally responsive teaching, diversity, equity, inclusion, it also increases student voice. The idea that this was led by our Diversity Club is a fabulous sign of student voice showing itself in our work.

Some of the things that students from high school will be doing is daily history announcements that will be done all this month. They'll have music during Break and Lunch all this month. They'll have an African American educational door decorating contest of scientists', musicians, artists, activists, authors, inventors, heroes, producers, actors – Black History Month Themes and this will be from February 6-10, 2023.

School Updates

School News / Plans to Celebrate Black History Month Across the District (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Embracing Our Differences at the high school for a diversity mural design contest from February 13-17, 2023. Schoolwide Assembly which is screening and panel discussion of “The Hate You Give” will be on February 15, 2023.

Dr. Sullivan says we’ve had this before, we have the Cohasset police involved with it. Last time it was a former METCO student. This supports a powerful discussion and is very meaningful to the students.

The middle school will be celebrating Black History Month with utility door decorating. Utilities classes compete for best decorated classroom from February 6-10, 2023. Students can demonstrate their knowledge of Black History learned during daily announcements each week at lunch February 10th and February 17th, 2023. Writing contest on Black History Month where students will create original work that celebrates an inspirational Black Leader Group or movement all month. A Black History Month Film Festival for students to view a grade-specific film and discuss how it connects to the Black History Month 2023 theme of Black Resistance on February 28th. Lastly, students will be encouraged to “drop everything and read” anything connected to Black History Month with the theme of resistance during utility on March 2nd, 2023 Read Across America Day.

On February 6th, 2023 at the elementary school, students will have a hip hop to promote positivity assembly sponsored by the PSO. Martin Luther King reading and writing. Each week read about a Black person and discuss their success focused on the arts, math, and science. Guest Readers – Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Scollins will host a Big Stair Read Aloud with grade levels. Mrs. Farrell will host a Big Stair Read Aloud with grade 1 students. Grade level Big Stair Meetings watching authors videos for Black History Month.

Our Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices really dovetails all of this into some of the things that are happening. We’re looking at our literature in our school libraries and our classroom libraries to make sure that we have literature that is culturally inclusive. A lot of researching is happening and one project by our 5th grade class is we’re studying the neighborhood.

At our middle school we had an author visit by Tiffany Jewell and then they’ll have another one Lisa Stringfellow who is a former student of Cohasset METCO and current Boston Public School Teacher to talk about her book “A Comb of Wishes.”

Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

(Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Teaching and Learning

- ❖ Diversity and Inclusivity Clubs at the middle and high schools.
- ❖ Focus on creating a diverse school and in the classroom libraries.
- ❖ Use of the New York University, Stienhardt School Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecards when looking at a new curriculum and materials to that curriculum.
- ❖ Virtual Meeting with Tiffany Jewell, author, and educator.
- ❖ Islamic Tiles Art project.
- ❖ Music class students will be singing several traditional songs from Africa, revisiting some of the famous jazz musicians they studied earlier in the year in our jazz unit.
- ❖ Enjoying the book “Trombone Shorty” while learning about the brass family.
- ❖ Use of preferred pronouns; Use of non-gender binding language.
- ❖ Focus on exploring the addition of core/supplemental texts within the curricula that represent, honor, and promote cultural diversity.

Professional Development

- ❖ Dr. Raymond Porch to talk about how we’re using data to support culturally responsive and inclusive teaching practices.
- ❖ New England Association of Schools and Colleges Self-Study Phase has a culturally responsive DNA inclusive practice lens.
- ❖ Year-long focus at Cohasset middle school on review of curriculum through a culturally responsive and inclusive lens.
- ❖ Implementation of new literacy approach which is routed in culturally responsive and inclusive practices and materials.
- ❖ High School teachers’ book club read the text Culturally Responsive Teaching for Multilingual Learners, Tools for Equity, by Sydney Snyder and Diane Staehr Fenner (2021).
- ❖ AP Language and Composition Diversity Project that promotes and honors diverse identities and cultures.
- ❖ Department Chair participation in DESE CURATE panel for ELA grades 9-12 curricula (2022-2023); Evaluation of various proposed DESE reviewed curricula for ELA grades 9-12 including texts that represent various cultures and perspectives.

Aleisa Gittens-Carle comments on Dr. Scollins presentation, there’s a lot of diversity work at all levels, great work, and Congratulations.

Dr. Scollins notes we have updates to our academic initiatives about MCAS with some interaction plans. One of the things that we are working on at all levels. In particular, the English department at the high school has grabbed hold of creating a way to have two things happen. One, they have a format to practice using the tools they would use during MCAS. There’s an expandable box on how to highlight all those kinds of things, and there are platforms out there that are used by our

Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

(Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Instructional Technology Educators who found out about this, it's called *Edge Elastic* so we're looking at this. Maybe it would be a little simpler than having to create a template ourselves. There is a strong sense of this when Dr. Scollins met with the English department around making sure that they take that practice off the table, in the sense of making sure that students have those skills to manage the system. Also, looking at how they're asking students to respond to the questions and then giving them feedback on that. All the groups were great to work with, but what really stuck out to Dr. Scollins was their enthusiasm that has been even greater all around. This will happen at all grade levels, but it was nice to see the high school really hit the ground with it throughout the day. We're changing this so they can refocus their questions on how they're asking questions. Tomorrow, we have our 2nd meeting on our curriculum review committee for math. We met a week and a half ago with our arts department and they're moving right along.

Mrs. St. Onge asks are they already using this tool? Dr. Scollins says they're just experimenting with it.

Mrs. St. Onge says not only is it collaborative, but are they publicly available for questions and quizzes and formats? Also, when a child takes an assessment whether its formative, or summative. When they get something wrong, they can reassign only on the things they got wrong. Then, they can review it, taking away the frustration of going back and redoing it. If they can just target a few questions to do this, the rest of it stays there so we can work on that. Mrs. St. Onge feels it's a more productive way to relook at work and get towards mastery. It's a nice tool and they'll be able to practice those on-line platforms to become more familiar with it when going into MCAS, this will really help.

Mr. Kearney comments there's one thing he's been struggling with for this committee is trying to get more parent involvement, trying to hear their voices. Mr. Kearney just wants to let the community know that we're available not only in committees, but we're available to talk anytime too. It's important that they know that they have a voice in their child's education. It can come from the facilities, or any kind of things parents have concerns with. We want them to know that we listen, we are a committee of parents. As spoken by Ms. Arbaje-Thomas on how the METCO Program started with parents, they've got five (5) parents here, so if they would like to reach out to the community, to let us know, because we're all in this together.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Transportation

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan wants to thank the Cohasset school community for all their patience. It's been a tough ordeal with our school bus driver's shortage. We knew we weren't delivering the product that we were proud of. The recent edition of First Student buses that were going to diesel eventually are very secure for the rest of the year.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Transportation

Dr. Sullivan says that itself is the most important part of his message. The other part would be that this week just tweaking things a bit to make sure that we can deal with bus over crowding properly and set routes that are proper. The app, the bus stop finder is popular will need to adjust to get going. We realize that this psalm hasn't solved all of the problems with the buses being crowded. We do have a lot of students on our buses, but it's a big step in the right direction and it's a step to now delivering a product that we've advertised in the first place. Dr. Sullivan thanks the transportation supervisor, also to Sue Owen our Director of Operations who worked with this to make this happen. One of the things having these extra three (3) buses, our supervisor of transportation can go on routes with folks to make sure that the routes are moving as safe as they can, to troubleshoot any problems that might be out there and to really devote time and energy to make sure this goes smoothly.

Mr. Dial comments as a parent who has a student riding on the First Student bus, it seems to have integrated well. We had some route delays on the first day as people were learning routes, which is expected. Mr. Dial was impressed that it worked and went smoothly. We want to keep working on the bus stop finder because folks says it's very good to have. It became very clear this week just how valuable it is. We do want to keep hearing more about that and continue to look at that. If there are other ways to utilize our extra resources to help spread out our transportation load, that's all that we can ask as we're weathering a difficult storm.

Food Service

We have a meeting on February 16th at the Osgood School for lunch in their cafeteria.

Mr. Kearney says they're still having conversation about hiring a chef at the school. We're trying to bring some of those services to the schools like updating school lunch lines to see if one will fit there.

Report from School Facilities Committee

Mr. Kearney states we had a meeting last night and Mr. MacLellan is a big advocate on trying to get this done. We had the town moderator, the select board at the meeting. Mr. Kearney has never seen a committee work so due diligence to get us in line for a new school. We felt like the middle high school wasn't up to Cohasset standards. We found that most of our schools were not being looked. At our meeting last night, we figured out who's in charge. We renovated the schools 20 years ago, however we didn't update them like we should have. Everyone was on the assumption that somebody was in charge. In the past we asked principals to go out and see what they need and put it on a list, and then we send it over. Principals don't know how to fix pipe leaks, fix a boiler, they're not mechanical engineers. Mr. Kearney suggests we hire somebody that will be in charge of the buildings. We're going to work together with those committees to reel everybody in and see what we need, because we did send out a study and we spent \$250,000 to find out what was going wrong with our schools.

Budget, Resources and Governance **Report from School Facilities Committee**

Mr. MacLellan would like to add to Mr. Kearney's report briefly. We have a warrant to a town meeting requesting \$1.5 million dollars for a feasibility study to explore the possibility of a new deconstruction on our high school if it's too big or do we renovate? This needs to go through our capital budget and then it needs to go through the advisory select board and they can all decide whether, or not they support that. Regardless of what their position is, we'll go to the voters at an annual town meeting. To what Mr. Kearney was said, we refer this to as the existing condition study that articulated all the issues with each building and the school facilities committee is now sort of compartmentalizing through these issues. There's a new school possibility and then there's also the existing maintenance and we're working with a budget addressing and chipping away at those creating a process chip-away at those systematically over the years to make sure that it's moved to maintenance that they need. In addition, we're exploring what a new facility would look like at some point.

Mr. Dial notes to the clarification of a new school versus maintenance on schools. Both Mr. MacLellan, and Mr. Kearney, as well as himself, are members of the School Facilities Committee, but Mr. Dial would like to talk more about this at some point, whether, or not, we should have a budget resources component on that review as well with the sub-committee and the school committee.

Mr. MacLellan says that they were going to work with the school facilities sub-committee level to work with the school committee. Mr. MacLellan suggested doing this at a sub-committee level. The school facilities committee is going to do this and sure *Visioner* will be in touch with whomever sits bias on the sub-committee, at some point in time.

Mr. Kearney says we need to have a sub-committee meeting, prior to the school facilities meeting and bring *Jason* in as well.

Mr. Carr says the other thing we need to discuss is a recommendation for this depending on the strategy, as is relates to our budget for the springtime, and we'll work with the proposal.

Community Relations / Communication **Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons**

Mrs. St. Onge says they're going to have a very romantic policy meeting on February 14th, Valentine's Day! The overhaul of getting all those policies dated, so that we have a fresh start with our policy binder.

Mr. Kearney addresses we had a Wellness committee meeting last night, and there were concerns trying to get more recess time that we talked about. There was also a lot of talk around Physical Education and some other things like Yoga, and those other kinds of experiences. They really want more Project Adventure because we have that rock wall. Mr. Kearney says that we need someone who is certified with that. We talked about the after-school programs and we're trying to keep the schools open until 6:00 PM, so that we can have a stipend for a teacher to run sports like basketball, dodgeball, something to keep the kids motivated during the day.

School Committee Governance

Topics Not Reasonable Anticipated by the Chair – None

Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Carr comments our secret weapon is wonderful and apologizes for not getting these minutes in on time. These are very lengthy, and are by no means perfect, but they capture everything that we're trying to do. We lost audio in the January 18th, 2023, meeting when our student liaison, Charlie Lankow was answering a question to Mr. Dial's question, and Mr. Carr was hoping Jennifer Souretis could take another look at this. We left that blank, so if any member from the school committee remembers, to please fill it in.

Chairman Dial says Vice Chairman MacLellan stole most of the things he was going to say to Charlie. Great presentation! There is one question Mr. Dial wanted to ask Charlie is they've heard from other student representatives recently from a student's perspective, it has been articulated through this committee. There were concerns about homework requirements, and stress.

Lost audio in video audio frame [15:19 to 17:55] due to internet connection issues.

Chairman Dial addresses we have four (4) sets of minutes in front of us from the November 16th, 2022, December 7th, 2022, January 4th, 2023 & January 18th, 2023, regular school committee meetings. These were provided in advance, although not too far in advance.

Mr. MacLellan notes mistake from the January 18th, 2023, meeting, page 17 reads "takes this fairly approach to this." It should read "really takes a fairly critical approach to this."

Motion by Mr. Carr to approve four (4) sets of minutes with a revision as discussed to the January 18th, 2023 minutes, seconded by Mr. MacLellan.

All-Aye

Future Agenda Items

Mr. Kearney would like the Sub-Committee to review our after-school programs.

Mrs. St. Onge comments we need to discuss the calendar for holding school committee meetings for next year. Another item that we're halfway through in, sharing out by students or teachers about ELA and Reader's Workshop. That was quite a big discussion at the beginning of the year. Mrs. St. Onge has seen what it looks like from the homework end of things with her older child, but she would love to have that shared. How teachers are feeling about it, what are they learning? We always love it when students come in and share their academic update.

Mr. Carr would like to discuss more in terms of the budget and resources. Mr. Carr requests to have a meeting towards the end of this month, but March 1st would be great! He would love to come back with a potential strategy in terms of how we might engage with our community around helping us to pass our budgets. A little more than just a committee update if he could have 5 minutes or more. Could we also put on the calendar to visit the METCO Headquarters again.

School Committee Governance

Future Agenda Items

Mr. Carr will be absent for the March 15th, 2023 school committee meeting, he has another commitment to tend to.

Mr. MacLellan would like to do a presentation for our custodial staff at some point. He would like to hear what they're lacking in resources and hear what they feel are challenges to them. Also, would like to explore what their current processes are and share that. We've done the most we can to make sure we have clean, functioning facilities for our students and staff.

Executive Session

Chairman Dial states there is no reason to move into Executive Session.

Adjourn**

Motion by Mr. MacLellan to adjourn meeting at 7:58 PM, seconded by Mrs. St. Onge.

All-Aye

**Requires Committee Vote / Action

Documents used at meeting:

Slide Presentation of the METCO Program & History

Presented by Milly Arbaje-Thomas, METCO President/CEO

METCO 2.0 – A Road Map to Antiracism for METCO - Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle

Inaugural, Multi-Cultural Night Event Flyer, April 13, 2023 - Ms. Aleisa Gittens-Carle

Slide show of pictures on World Read Aloud Day; – Dr. Leslie Scollins

A Tribute Walk to Melnea Cass Boulevard – Presented by *Anaya Pierce*

3,150 METCO Students – 33 School Districts

1966	Arlington	1968	Cohasset
	Braintree		Concord
	Brookline		Dover
	Lexington		Lincoln-Sudbury
	Lincoln		Lynnfield
	Newton		Natick
	Wellesley		Reading
1967	Concord-Carlisle		Scituate
	Framingham		Swampscott
	(Until 2008)		Wakefield
	Hingham		Wayland
	Marblehead		Westwood
	Needham	1970	Belmont
	Sharon	1971	Foxborough
	Walpole	1972	Dover/Sherborn
		1974	Bedford
		1975	Sudbury
		1977	Melrose